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## **THE CONDUCT OF BRIEF DEVOTIONAL MEETINGS**

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# THE CONDUCT OF BRIEF DEVOTIONAL MEETINGS

BY

**PAUL MICOU, B.D.**

*Secretary for Theological Seminaries, Student Department,  
International Committee Young Men's Christian Associations.*

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## PREFACE

The inspiration for this attempt to discuss the conduct of brief devotional meetings came as the writer listened to a masterly address on worship by Professor William Adams Brown. That address has been published in pamphlet form and renders superfluous any discussion in this book of the nature of worship itself. The immediate occasion of my undertaking this manual, wholly apart from the above, was the request from some of my colleagues on the International Committee of Young Men's Christian Associations that I formulate some suggestions for Association devotional meetings. The task soon grew beyond such limits, because these meetings are merely instances of a type of religious service not treated in more elaborate manuals on public worship. From the first I have had constant encouragement and kind criticism. In consequence the product is hardly that of a single mind, for the manuscript has often been recast to meet the criticisms and incorporate the ideas of men of many communions and different schools of thought. The number of those to whom I am thus indebted is too great to permit of individual mention, and I must take this method of gratefully acknowledging their share in the work.

Two things should be borne in mind by the reader. The leader of the meetings, concerning which this manual is written, is presumed to be a layman, and the meetings themselves are of a very restricted type. The small devotional meeting is the best place for experiments in methods of worship, for there people who are intimately associated with each other respond readily to a leader's taking them along unfamiliar paths. This manual strives to point the way to greater freedom, sincerity, color, and warmth in such services, and those using it will find they can carry many of its principles into more formal public worship.

PAUL MICOU

August 15, 1917.

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## **INTRODUCTION**



## INTRODUCTION

Men are today longing for adequate guidance in worship. Necessity is driving them to God. The breakdown of a supposedly stable order of society under the strain of war makes the search for reality imperative. The instinct for God finds its answer not in private quests alone, but perhaps even more in united efforts. It has well been said, "The soul of man is made for fellowship; isolated half its strength is gone."<sup>1</sup> Speaking from another angle, a teacher recently told his class that the full realization and expression of God cannot be made by a single individual, but only by a community of fellow Christians.<sup>2</sup>

It should give us cause for keen concern that men so seldom find what they crave in worship. They come hungry to devotional services and go away empty. One who has had wide experience bears this testimony: "Wherever I have been I have found men whose spiritual needs demanded more than they found in our ordinary conventionalized services. They ask for the sense of spiritual reality. They desire to lay hold of God and the Unseen World

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<sup>1</sup> "Fellowship of Silence," p. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Prof. George Cross, D.D., Rochester Theological Seminary.

with a firmer grip. There are not wanting many who have turned from the Church to new and strange ways, seeking what they ought to find with us. . . . Can we say now what St. Paul could say of Corinthian worship in his day, that were an unbeliever or unlearned person to enter our church during our Sunday worship he would be judged of all, and the secrets of his heart be made manifest, so that falling down upon his face he would worship God, and report that God is in us of a truth? This is surely what this modern world all about us is in search of.”<sup>3</sup>

Can it be that our services are not flexible enough, that whether liturgical or non-liturgical we are becoming fettered by the customs of the past? Are there not whole realms of worship into which the average person never enters? Pleas for greater flexibility are coming from opposite directions. The Bishop of Winchester writes, “I think that a large number of our people feel, and rightly feel, some lack in our church services. They keep us occupied, if we respond to their guidance: it is their strong point that they invite throughout the active participation of all worshipers. But, except in the quiet spaces at the time of Holy Communion, which all have not been trained to use, they *do not perhaps leave us freedom enough.*”<sup>4</sup> Conducting services

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<sup>3</sup> “Fellowship of Silence,” pp. 238, 9.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. v, vi. Italics not in original.

with the soldiers at the front in France led "Gipsy" Smith to make this strong statement as to what the men would demand of the churches on their return: "They want warmth, movement, directness, and absolute sincerity. We must get an atmosphere of graver reality in our public worship and church life. I do not mean the services should become a sort of religious free-and-easy. But *they must be more full of movement and warmth and color.*"<sup>5</sup>

Freedom, Warmth, Color, Sincerity. These are serviceable words for the testing of every devotional meeting we plan to conduct. The earnest, pains-taking leader is like the householder commended by Christ "who bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old." The devotional heritage of the past can be moulded by the modern spirit into a service free from rigidity and formalism. It would be well to acquire a due appreciation of the values and the difficulties of the liturgical and the non-liturgical. The comparison is admirably and briefly drawn in a pamphlet on worship by Prof. William Adams Brown, D.D., to which the reader is referred for a discussion of the subject more fundamental than this manual aims to be.

"The difficulty in the case of liturgical worship is in part that of monotony; in part that of rigidity. The constant repetition of the same form tends for

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<sup>5</sup> *The Christian Advocate*, April 12, 1917. Italics not in original.

many people to produce a certain sense of unreality. The words lose their meaning just because they are familiar, and the mere repetition of the ritual comes to be thought of as worship apart from its effect upon the consciousness of those who take part in it.

Again, the liturgical service lacks flexibility. Unlike free worship, which responds in new ways to the new and ever changing situations of the day's experience, it must express itself through the forms which have been prescribed. When a great crisis comes in the life of the nation, or of the individual, when some new problem is to be faced, some deeper depths of experience to be plumbed, the soul craves new words, or at least a new combination of the old to fit the new situation. But for this the liturgical service makes no provision.

The difficulty with the worship of our non-liturgical churches is just the opposite. Its besetting sin is slovenliness. Unrestrained by any prescription from without, the minister follows the mood of the moment, with the result that great reaches of the Christian experience are passed over without expression, and heights to which the spirit might climb are never attained. And with this arbitrariness there goes a certain carelessness and lack of dignity. One gets the impression that worship is an easy thing, for which no special preparation is needed, that a prayer can be thrown off in one's odd moments, as one might write a note to a friend. The sense of standing in an august presence, the mood of reverence which befits one who is confronted by the ultimate mystery is not characteristic of the worship of our non-liturgical churches."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> "Worship," pp. 15-17. Association Press.

It is no purpose of this manual to enter the difficult field of methods of conducting formal church services, even though the quotations it has been convenient to use thus far have had reference to such worship. Nor is it intended to furnish here suggestions for the great gatherings where the message of the speaker is the prime consideration, such as theater meetings, evangelistic campaigns, and great conventions. There are, however, very many gatherings of small groups of people for specific purposes. Here the conditions are favorable for introducing variety into the expression of devotion and giving all present a greater share in the fellowship of united worship. Into these meetings of small groups of intimately associated people should come a deeper reverence and a richer devotion.

It would be impossible to enumerate all such groups, but a few illustrations will make clear their general character. In most large buildings used for the executive offices of religious organizations members of the staff and stenographic force meet daily for prayer. The desire here is not so much to acquire information of the latest developments of the work in which all are immersed as it is, through worship together, to consecrate in Christ's name the daily round of office work. So, too, in the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Association buildings of our large cities it is customary for the staff to meet for prayer before separating

for the varied tasks of the large plant. If this time be filled chiefly with the rendering of reports and the issuing of instructions, the great opportunity for inspiration and fellowship has been irretrievably lost. In college Association work, "cabinet" meetings and gatherings of personal workers furnish an ideal opportunity for fellowship in worship before the discussion of business. In schools, both public and private, the leader of the Christian Association or Club should give more time to devotions with the members than is often now the case. Societies, clubs, and guilds in churches often neglect the devotional for the "practical" at their meetings. Bible and mission study circles find that one fourth of the time spent in worship gives meaning and value to the remaining three fourths. The common testimony of delegates is that the heart of a conference is the period when all the plans are united into an acceptable offering and laid at the throne of God for Him to dispose of as He wills. In such united worship the presence of the Holy Spirit is invoked to preside over the conference. Frequently the conduct of a "campaign" brings together in daily session a group of executive or personal workers who should spend much of the time in prayer. Often in dormitories either early morning or vesper services are held, to the conduct of which much thought should be given. In military camps it is customary to hold "good-night services" in the Association

buildings. These services partake of the nature of family prayers, and should be planned on the basis of such intimacy. Indeed, if the object of weekly prayer meetings in churches is simple devotion, this manual will have suggestions for their conduct. It may also apply to noon-day or other services becoming so common in all churches during the Lenten season.

It is necessary clearly to understand the nature of the group to which the suggestions in this manual best apply. It is small in size and there exists a sense of intimacy between the members, either because they are co-workers, meeting frequently, or because the circumstances of the meeting give the sense of fellowship. All understand that the business in hand is worship, not the acquiring of information. In most cases the training of the members of the group is such that they can carry through a well planned service briefly and heartily. In such an atmosphere a service can be rendered which is neither liturgical nor non-liturgical, but something between the barrenness of the non-liturgical and the formalism of the liturgical. Printed forms of service are not necessary, yet the group should be able to follow their leader intelligently by whatever path he leads them. This presupposes on the part of both leader and worshipers a knowledge of the A B C's of worship. Consequently the first portion of this manual is a discussion of the *elements of*

*worship*, giving the rationale of each. Thus, with an appreciation of the share each element can have in the whole, the leader can construct a service, consistent and satisfying, selecting what suits his purpose. The second part is a discussion of *types of services*, so that the leader can adapt or invent a form of service which suits the occasion and meets the needs of the worshipers.

Such leadership requires willingness to spend much time in preparation. The failure of the leader adequately to prepare accounts more for the unsatisfying nature of many meetings than any other single cause. Because the meetings are brief, in most cases fifteen minutes in length, the difficulties of preparation are increased. Every element of worship which enters into them must be weighed carefully to determine its contribution to the whole, and the subject matter of Scripture, prayer, and hymns should be unified. Worthy of careful observance by every leader is the advice given in the Presbyterian "Book of Common Worship": "It is recommended that the Minister make faithful preparation in his own heart and mind to lead the People . . . with forethought and much care, in order not only to avoid injudicious length, but also that the prayer may be framed to express his own thought and feeling, and may also be suited to the occasion or the special need of the congregation."<sup>7</sup> If this is a

<sup>7</sup> P. viii.

proper demand to make of the minister, it should be made even more strongly of the layman, who has never been trained, as has the other, in the conduct of public worship.

No matter how brief the service, it is worthy of the most careful and painstaking preparation. It is not fair to those to whom may be assigned some part in it that they should be called upon unexpectedly, with no knowledge of the significance of their contribution. Part of the leader's preparation should consist in his seeing them and conferring concerning his plan. Considering the inspiration of a deeply devotional service to one perplexed or overburdened with daily tasks, the time spent in preparation should not be grudged. Worship fundamentally is coming into the presence of God. An ignorant and careless shepherd cannot lead those hungry for spiritual food in the green pastures of true worship.

Occasions arise, of course, when a man without previous notice is obliged to lead others in worship. Under such circumstances his own spiritual life is severely tested. If he has lived near to Christ, this forced self-revelation will be an inspiration to his fellow worshipers, and his confident faith will be a benediction. But, while such exceptions must be borne in mind, this manual presupposes services conducted more or less regularly, with ample notice to each leader of his turn to lead. To count on the inspiration of the moment or the momentum of past

spiritual experiences is, under these circumstances, to trifle with the souls of others and to grieve the Holy Spirit.

Owing to the constant reference in what follows to the matter given in Part III, the reader is advised to familiarize himself with that section before proceeding further. An effort has there been made to arrange in convenient form such material as might be useful in devotional services. It should be borne in mind that this "apparatus" of worship is merely by way of suggestion and not an end in itself. It should be used according to the principle that liturgical forms are supplementary to the extempore utterance of devotion and in this relation impart order and reverence to a worship that is fundamentally spontaneous.

**PART I**  
**ELEMENTS OF WORSHIP**



## PART I

### ELEMENTS OF WORSHIP

In endeavoring to list the elements which enter into a devotional service there are two ways in which we can proceed. One is to examine personal experience and find what has proved most helpful. The difficulty with this method is the limited experience which any individual, no matter how wide his acquaintance, can have. The other way is to examine the experience of the past and find what has proved helpful in all lands from the earliest Christian times to the present. This has the advantage of universality, though it is beset with the dangers of formality.

The earliest forms of Christian worship which are preserved for us bear the names of the great leaders of the Church, such as St. Basil or St. Chrysostom. Even if they are not from the pens of those whose names they bear, they undoubtedly express their spirit. Later the liturgies began to differ according to the characteristics of the national churches. Thus we have the Syrian, the Egyptian, the Persian, the Byzantine, the Hispano-Gallican, the Roman, and the British liturgies. At the Reformation some

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churches quite naturally endeavored to free themselves from all form and to give the spirit of worship free utterance. Other churches kept those portions of the liturgies of the past which in the enlightenment of the time were thought most helpful.

These Reformation liturgies have been still further revised and are the best source from which to discover the elements which enter into worship. In addition, various modern attempts have been made to construct forms of service for special occasions. Selecting the elements of worship which are more or less constant in these liturgical collections, and testing them by the manner of worship in services and meetings where liturgical forms are not used, it appears that the following elements in whole or in part constitute public worship: silence, introductory appeal or invocation, exhortation, confession, united petition, praise and thanksgiving, reading of Scripture, statement of belief, call to prayer, prayer, and blessing or benediction. Some might be inclined to list the singing of hymns as a separate element in worship, but each hymn can be classified under some one of those already given, according to its thought and form. The sermon manifestly does not come within the scope of this manual.

The leader will make such a combination of these elements of worship as may best suit his purpose in arranging a brief devotional service. The following discussions may serve to show the value of each as

the voicing of a fundamental spiritual desire, and their interrelation in the expression of the instinct for worship. The discussion of the types of meetings, which constitutes the second part of the manual, will show how selection of all these elements can be made so as to give the service unity and consistency.

*Silence*

It might seem odd to begin a discussion of the elements of audible worship with a section on silence. Yet silence plays a very real part in worship, for by means of it we can cause our hearts to be still and to realize the presence of God. By it also can we attain to the fullest sense of fellowship with other worshipers. One of the common faults of our devotional meetings is the way in which we rush into the presence of God without pause for preparation. To overcome this fault we should school ourselves to maintain silence and a prayerful attitude immediately on entering the room in which the devotions are to be held. Equally important is it to remain for a moment of silent worship after the service is concluded, in order that there be a final petition for oneself and others. These are not the only occasions for silence. A wise leader will provide many, even though they are not customary. Indeed, so much are we slaves to ceaseless activity, that if a pause occurs in a service the congregation cranes forward

in alarm to see what has gone wrong. "Silence is not a gap to be filled; it is the greatest of all preparations and the climax of all adoration."<sup>1</sup> Not the least of its benefits is the wonderful sense of fellowship with which it clothes the worshipers. It creates an atmosphere in which it is easy and natural to hear the voice of God. The description of a service of silence in the second part of the manual develops these statements more fully.

*Introductory Appeal or Invocation*

Every well ordered public exercise has a definite mode of beginning. There are two well recognized methods of beginning a service, aside from the use of a hymn. One is a call to worship addressed to those present in the words of appropriate verses of Scripture. The other is a prayer of invocation to God. Often both the sentences and the prayer are used. There is nothing which will more quickly bring a group of people into an attitude of reverence than the measured utterance of carefully chosen verses from Scripture. According to present custom a hymn is the chief means of calling an audience to attention, the music being counted on to drown out those who are loath to cease talking. Thus the fervor is lost with which the hymn might be sung if the people approached it after the hallowing effect of some words from Scripture. The sentences may

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<sup>1</sup> "Fellowship of Silence," p. 145.

be chosen with a view to suggesting the topic of the service, or they may be simply the call to worship. A careful selection of such verses is given in the third part of this manual. Sometimes the sentences are in the form of a "responsory," a sentence of Scripture by the leader being appropriately responded to by the worshipers, but this is hardly possible without printed forms of service.

### *Exhortation*

A simple exhortation serves the valuable purpose of giving the keynote of a brief devotional service. In this way the leader and his fellow worshipers come into the closest understanding with each other. The sentences of which we have just spoken are in themselves an exhortation, but the leader can well make in addition a statement as to the purpose of the service and the central lesson to be drawn from it. In many church services this is done by the prayer of invocation, but in such informal group meetings as we have in mind it had better be a simple statement, summed up, perhaps, in a brief prayer.

### *Confession*

This element is not often necessary in a brief service, but there is no reason why it should not be present more frequently. If people are deeply moved by what they have heard and are convinced of their own unworthiness, it is right and proper

and psychologically necessary that opportunity be given them to confess their sins and failings publicly and in general terms. Nearly all prayer books of the different Protestant churches, and the preliminary matter of a great many of the hymnals, print the "General Confession," and most persons are able to follow it if said slowly. But there are ways of confession other than by a prayer said in unison. Some hymns are preeminently of the confession type, as for instance, "Bowing low in deep contrition, Lord, we come to Thee." They are very effective if the leader asks that they be sung as confessions, softly and in penitential attitude. Certain psalms are good for confessional use, notably the 51st. Throughout the prophetic books are sentences of earnest penitence which could be woven into corporate confession. Especially true is this of the 9th chapter of Daniel. The confessions here referred to are given in the third part of the manual.

#### *United Petition*

At some point in most services opportunity should be given for united petition. Otherwise the only prayer is that uttered by some individual, which at best only partly expresses the aspirations of all the worshipers. Hymns furnish this element, but if circumstances prevent the use of music in informal services, as is often the case, we must turn to other channels of united intercession.

The Lord's Prayer furnishes an ideal opportunity for such expression of common worship. It is not only universal in its petitions, but it also embraces all forms of spiritual aspiration: namely, address, adoration, petition, and praise. The Lord's Prayer is the classic expression of unity, and this idea alone should guarantee its constant use in the devotions of fellow-workers in some great cause. The chief objection to the frequent use of the Lord's Prayer is the fear of falling into the "vain repetition" against which Christ warned. Possibly this can be overcome, and more meaning can be given to those petitions which most nearly cover the theme of the service by a slight pause after their utterance. The leader would, of course, have to request this in advance.

### *Praise and Thanksgiving*

The attitude of adoration should characterize every act of worship. The Father in Heaven, we know by analogy and direct teaching, rejoices as a human father to have His children tell Him that they love Him, and why they love Him, and to make mention of those things for which they are especially grateful. Praise in the words of Scripture may best be rendered by the use of certain of the Psalms and by those hymns in the early chapters of Luke's gospel in which those surrounding our Lord express their joy at His birth, namely, Luke 1:46, ff., and

Luke 2:29, ff. (see Part III). The recitation of a psalm is generally concluded with the sentences of praise known as the *Gloria Patri*, "Glory be to the Father," etc. This, which is among the most ancient forms of worship, in a sense Christianizes the Psalms, for the old Covenant is only perfected in the light of our Lord's teaching. So, too, can the *Doxology* be fittingly used. It is useful also for any spontaneous expression of praise. The greatest hymn of praise, familiar to most people, is the *Gloria in Excelsis*, "Glory be to God on high," etc. of ancient Greek origin. This is printed in most hymnals.

But a leader need not be limited to ancient forms. Some modern "Te Deums," notably those of the English poet John Oxenham,<sup>2</sup> are most suggestive, and by virtue of their being modern in expression but cast in ancient forms are very stimulating. A striking sentence, useful at all times, is 1 Timothy 1:17, "Now unto the King eternal, incorruptible, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever, Amen."

### *The Reading of Scripture*

So generally is it recognized that Christian education rests on the Scriptures, and that education is one of the purposes of worship, that it is

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<sup>2</sup> "All's Well," pp. 43, 58, 157.

hardly necessary to say more here than to urge a careful choice of selections for Bible reading. If there be time for both the Old and New Testament, selections mutually supplementary are valuable to show the fulness and progressiveness of God's revelation. The references for the topics in Part III were selected on this principle, and show the variety of selection possible. It is well to observe the major events of Christ's life at the seasons set apart for them in the Christian Year by reading the narratives which describe them. The value of the Christian Year lies in its enabling the worshipers to follow the life of Christ and keep the great truths to be learned therefrom clearly before their minds. The chief memorial days, which the great majority of Christendom unites in observing, are so few that they cause no serious interruption in any cycle of services which a group of people may be conducting (see Part III).

The book and chapter of the scripture passage ought to be announced, for the worshiper, if desiring to study it privately, needs some guide to enable him to locate it. Especially is this the case when one of the modern translations of the New Testament is used, and there is a natural desire to compare it with the more familiar versions. Many people like to follow the reading, if Bibles are at hand, for seeing the printed page helps their understanding.

## 24. *The Conduct of Brief Devotional Meetings*

### *Statement of Belief*

From the earliest times there has been some statement of belief made in worship. It is as if Christ Himself were asking the worshipers, "Who say ye that I am?" and receiving in mighty response a declaration of belief in His deity.

The first person singular as subject of the verb "believe" causes some to regard the use of the creed as an individualistic act. No doubt a non-believer would receive as many answers to a query as to the nature of Christianity as there were persons questioned. Great minds at intervals in the Christian era have struck off systems of theology which have been enshrined by various bodies in Christendom in "confessions of faith." Against these men of later ages have been prone to revolt as views which once were private, local, and temporary. Not so, however, with the earliest creed of the undivided Church. "Here is a real authority offered, corporate, democratic, catholic. Here are an innumerable lot of men and women, multitudes whom no man can number, of every degree of culture, of every country, every age and every race, who in a few brief, simple sentences declare what is that common faith by which they all have lived. It is a tremendous and secure assurance of truth and safety."<sup>3</sup> The clauses

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<sup>3</sup> Lecture on "The Authority of Creeds," by Rt. Rev. P. M. Rhinelander, D.D., Cambridge, Mass., 1910.

of the Apostles' Creed are like guide posts set up by experienced leaders in Christian thought and allowed to stand by subsequent travelers of the Way, because they point to the Truth. Each new traveler believes in them until he can verify them by experience, for he trusts the common consent of his predecessors.

The Greek word translated "believe" means "to put one's trust in." The clauses of the creed are not so much collections of dogma as they are definitions of the Person in whom we trust. Therefore the creed is in the service not so much as a recitation of a body of doctrine as an *act of faith*. The Apostles' Creed contains three parts, describing the three Persons of the Trinity. First, belief is expressed in God the Father, Who is acclaimed the Creator of the universe; second, belief in Jesus Christ, Whose deity and lordship are recognized in the words "His only Son, our Lord," which are followed by a brief statement of the chief facts of the incarnation, showing the fulness with which He underwent human experience; and third, belief in the Holy Spirit, the sphere of Whose operations is stated to be the Church universal, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection, and eternal life.

The Nicene Creed is mainly an expansion of the Apostles' Creed in more definite terms. The *Te Deum* has many of the elements of a creed, especially

in its central portion which, like the great creeds, recites the events of Christ's life. It has what the others lack, a concluding portion recognizing our moral nature and our dependence on God to keep us from sin. It would be worth much to use this ancient hymn occasionally as a creed.

The true worshiper, contemplating the greatness of God, instinctively speaks his faith and trust and confidence. Instances of such spontaneous utterances are frequent in the Bible. Great hymn writers have put their creeds into verse. Some of the Psalms breathe a simple trust which is a statement of faith. This suggests the wide range of selection possible in bringing the element of recitation of a creed into a devotional service. Psalms like the 23rd and the 90th, hymns like "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty," and brief creeds like the *Gloria Patri* can be used to vary the use of the Apostles' Creed. But let it be recognized by the worshipers that these selections are used as expressions of belief and trust in lieu of a more formal creed.

#### *Call to Prayer*

Short sections of Scripture, by which the leader makes part of a statement and those present respond with the supplementing idea, are very useful in giving to the worshipers a greater share in the service. While these may be used at any point, they form a particularly fitting way to call the wor-

shipers to prayer. If the services contemplated in this manual are held daily, it might be well for those sharing in them to learn certain sentences so that they could reply appropriately and readily to the leader. Those given in Part III are a careful selection and rearrangement of familiar responsories in the prayer books of the various churches. Others can be found in any book of devotion, or can be constructed from the Psalms and other portions of Scripture.

Most appropriate of all is the "mutual blessing," in which the leader addresses the worshipers, "The Lord be with you," and they respond, "And with thy Spirit." This is usually the appeal on the part of the leader to the worshipers to join with him in prayer, and is followed by the words, "Let us pray."

### *Prayer*

In prayer we come to the heart of any service, for it is the supreme act of the soul whether in private or public worship. There is a decided advantage in postponing the longer period of prayer until the latter part of the service, for by that time all are properly attuned to what is the most difficult, if most central, part of the service. Especially is this true if others besides the leader are to pray, either spontaneously or by appointment.

Prayer should be definite and based upon the thought chosen for the service. To this end it is

well that those who are asked by the leader to pray should understand clearly the part which their prayers are to play in the service as a whole. Brief prayers dealing with a single petition are often-times better than a single prayer covering a great many subjects, but this is a matter of preference for the leader. By the use of the word *Amen*, "so be it," at the close of every prayer, the worshipers make the prayer their own and ask God to grant it. The word therefore is not a mere sign of conclusion, but is itself an ejaculatory prayer.

Prayer consists of three parts: the ascription, in which some attribute of divine nature or method of grace is mentioned with thankfulness; the petition; and the conclusion, in which the prayer is said to be through Jesus Christ. If the prayer has been directed to Him, acknowledgment is made of His relation to the other persons of the Trinity in such words as "To Thy honor and glory, Whom with the Father and the Holy Spirit we worship and glorify as one God, world without end." A similar method of making one's prayer trinitarian is used in concluding an invocation to the Holy Spirit.

It is a cause for concern to note the frequency with which men end their public prayers abruptly, without pleading the merits of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, as *He Himself told us to do*. This is most noticeable in a circle of prayer where each takes up the petition where the one next has left

off. Such an omission in the customary and proper forms of prayer is most disconcerting to other worshipers, suggesting to them a possible disbelief in the deity of our Lord on the part of the one who prays. The customary conclusion is, "through Jesus Christ, our Lord," but it is frequently expanded by reference to the work or "office" of Christ.

Another unfortunate expression of underlying disbelief is the agnostic tone of many prayers. In most cases this is due to lack of fundamental theological education, or to a mind narrowly logical. In prayer God is told that He is far beyond our comprehension and that we cannot understand His purposes, but that nevertheless we trust Him. Such a prayer ignores the revelation of God in the Scriptures, to which we as Christians are committed, whatever our particular theories as to the method of inspiration may be. We *do* know God, because He was revealed in Jesus Christ, and we *do* understand in the spiritual realm His purposes for us and the whole world. In expressing trust in the face of lack of knowledge or guidance, it is well to recognize that the basis of our trust lies in what God has revealed to us of Himself and His kingdom.

The frequency with which the same individual begins his prayers with a stereotyped ascription, or falls into a repetition of phrases in the prayer calls for comment. There are some stand-bys in prayer meetings whose prayers can almost be foretold by

those who have heard them week after week traveling the ruts of habit. If any one detects this tendency growing upon himself, the only cure is rigorously to weed out the habitual expressions, and to seek for variety and proper spirit by a faithful study of the great prayers of the past.

He who leads in public prayer must strive to forget that he has hearers. Too often gratuitous information is given God which is really intended for the men in the pews. Such homilies are usually introduced by the apologetic phrase, "Lord, Thou knowest." All the attendant circumstances connected with a request should be rigidly excised, and petitions should be simple and direct.

Certain hymns make admirable prayers and, if sung as such, the worshipers should be in a prayerful attitude, or at least understand that in singing the hymn they are in that way voicing their united petitions. Nearly all such hymns ask for spiritual blessings and endowments, and do not deal with specific temporal needs. They are universal and not individual. In this respect such hymn-prayers are like the ancient petitions which have found their place in the prayer books. They were both forged on the anvil of universal human experience.

### *Blessing*

Just as it is advisable for a service to have an impressive and suggestive beginning, so also is it

well that it come to a fitting close. In church services this is usually accomplished by a blessing. However, the more intimate brief services with which this manual deals are, according to present custom, allowed to end with a hymn or prayer, and the group breaks up with no opportunity for silent devotion. The remedy for this fault would seem to lie in closing with a blessing as in more formal services. Most of the blessings, taken from the closing words of some of the epistles, are so striking in their wording that they give the sense of peace and divine favor.

Blessings are of two kinds, the benediction, pronounced by the minister, and the blessing which is uttered by any leader in a service as one of the worshipers. The difference between them lies in the use of "you" and "us." The former the minister uses as representative of God and ordained by the Church. Any benediction can be turned into a blessing by the change of these words. The most customary blessings are the words of Aaron, "The Lord bless us, etc.," and the "grace" of II Cor. 13:14. A representative collection of Scripture blessings is given in Part III. The well-known words of the Mizpah are often used in Christian Association circles by leader and worshipers together as a mutual blessing, "The Lord watch between me and thee when we are absent one from the other." A very helpful way to conclude a service

is with the *Nunc Dimittis*, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace" (see Part III). This should be said in unison, not responsively. Another effective conclusion is the singing of "Peace, perfect peace." The blessing is most fruitful when it is pronounced after a few moments of silent prayer.

### *Hymns*

As was suggested above, hymns are the favorite way in which all present can unite in prayer, praise, or confession. They form, therefore, too important a phase of worship to be lightly treated. Hymns should be selected to bear upon the general theme of the service. Practical examples of this are given in Part III. Nearly all hymnals arrange their hymns according to subjects, so there should be no difficulty in choosing appropriate hymns for services of penitence, consecration, meditation, intercession, and the like, or for the observance of the Christian Year. When so chosen, they contribute in a greater degree than any other element to giving a certain tone to the service.

Where time is lacking to permit the singing of the entire hymn, the most suitable verses should be chosen. Often there is a disagreeable interruption while the leader silences the musician and announces "the last verse." There is no special virtue in the last verse because it is last. Again by force of habit some leaders always announce "the first (two)

and the last verses," if the hymn is a long one. If any omissions are necessary, let them be as carefully planned as anything else in a properly conducted service.

### *Posture*

The subject of posture in worship is a delicate theme, for men follow the customs of their respective churches. But there is a reverent and an irreverent way of doing everything. In churches where kneeling in prayer is the proper form, surely bowing forward is not proper; or if the custom is to bow in prayer, only laziness and irreverence can account for some worshipers leaning comfortably back in a chair with elbow propped on a hymn book and hand over the eyes. Again it is physically easier to sing on one's feet, and a brief three or five minutes in this position should not be tiring to any group of people. Psychologically the appropriate attitude for praise is standing, and traditionally it is the only posture for recitation of the Creed. Physical conditions often make kneeling impracticable, in which case standing is the natural attitude for prayer. Services held out-doors might require standing throughout. After all, as first suggested, the object in view is that the body as well as the mind should express reverence.



**PART II**  
**TYPES OF SERVICE**



## PART II

### TYPES OF SERVICE

The object of this part of the manual is not so much to present a series of services in cut and dried form, as to suggest types of services which a leader can make by a suitable selection and combination of the elements of worship treated in the foregoing section.

#### *Service with Brief Comment or Talk*

The attention here is centered on an exposition of the scripture reading, or on a brief talk for which the scripture reading furnishes the point of departure. It is the most common form of brief devotional service in use today and has become almost stereotyped. For that reason every effort should be made to introduce variety. The subject of the comment or talk becomes the keynote of the service, determining the form of all the elements of worship combining to make the whole. The "exhortation," therefore, would be a clear statement of the idea about which the service centers.

A special plea might be made here for the ex-

pository type of address. The prevailing tendency in preaching today is toward the topical type. A subject is chosen and all available material in the Bible is brought to bear on the development of the theme. Men and women who gather frequently to obtain inspiration for daily tasks from their devotions do not want the individual theories of the leader as much as they do the plain teaching of the Bible unfolded in modern terms. Incidents from the lives of Bible characters, the human outbursts in the Psalms, the stirring messages of the prophets, the searching teachings and parables of our Lord, the brief expositions of Christian doctrine in the epistles, furnish an inexhaustible mine from which a unit of a few verses can be chosen, expanded, illustrated, applied, and prayed about to the spiritual upbuilding of all present.

A very stimulating variation of this form of service is to throw the subject open for general comment immediately after the reading of the Scripture, or after a very brief introduction by the leader. The more intimate the gathering is, the more readily will the worshipers open their hearts to one another, and the passage under consideration will be illuminated from many angles of Christian experience. It is usually necessary to elicit the comments, not by a general invitation to speak, but by suggestive questions like, "Can you illustrate this Christian doctrine by something in your own experi-

ence?" or "Is this principle really applicable today in our own community, and what will happen if we apply it?"

### *Prayer Meeting*

Many will wonder how any distinction can be drawn between the above and the usual "prayer meeting." Possibly the distinction lies only in the proportion of time allotted to exposition and to prayer. In a prayer meeting most of the time will be given to prayer, and the scripture reading and comment will serve the purpose of giving the subject of the petitions. Those offering prayer in this case will probably not have prepared beforehand, as in more formal meetings, and such direction and suggestion will be advisable to give unity to the devotions. No effort should be made to force those present to pray audibly, as is sometimes done if a meeting "drags." As already pointed out, one of our gravest faults is to feel a sort of terror of having some part of a service unoccupied. Silence is not inactivity. It may signify the stirring, outpouring, upward movement of the souls of those present, and should not be broken by urgent appeals of the leader for some one "to lead in prayer," or by the forced utterances of one who feels that the silence "has got on his nerves." If the inside history of many a prayer meeting could be written it would show that men were primed to offer prayer "if

nobody else did." Thus the spontaneity of the worship is in appearance only, for throughout the period of prayer those who have been asked to act as stopgaps are not themselves praying, but are busy constructing a suitable prayer and wondering whether it is time to utter it. If men are asked to lead in prayer, the request and the statement of the subject for petition should come long enough in advance of the meeting for preparation to be made, subject to such natural revision or phrasing as the Holy Spirit gives in the atmosphere of united prayer. Sometimes the leader must tactfully repress those who are always on their feet, in order to encourage the more timid to audible prayer. This is in accordance with Paul's injunction about all being given an opportunity to prophesy: "If anything be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace."<sup>1</sup>

### *Litany*

Many will think it rash indeed to suggest that the leader prepare his own litany, but the great variety of litanies which have come down to us from the past and in each national liturgy would suggest the value and popularity of this form of service. In fact it gives the largest possible share in the service to the worshipers, for they join by means

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<sup>1</sup> **I Cor. 14:30.**

of responses in every ascription to God, in every pleading of the merits of Jesus, and in every petition. Let no one think, however, that a litany can be uttered offhand. It should be carefully prepared after much thought and prayer, so that the topics for petition are all chosen beforehand, and if the exact words are not drawn up, at least the leader must be so steeped in the spirit of intercession that his petitions will be brief and dignified.

A litany has four parts, (1) the ascriptions to the Trinity; (2) the pleading of the merits of the incarnation of Our Lord; (3) the petitions, all addressed to Christ; and (4) the conclusion.

1. The ascriptions take the form of an address to each Person of the Trinity, mentioning some attribute, chosen according to the tenor of the service, and receiving as a response from the worshipers, "Have mercy upon us, miserable sinners." The last two words, however, are often omitted. The fourth ascription is to the Trinity. The form suggested in Part III, though somewhat unusual, will illustrate these statements.

2. The pleading of the merits of the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus gives wide room for adapting the litany to the purpose of the service. Everything finds its inspiration and example in the life of Jesus, whether it be the ordinary routine of life, the cause of social regeneration, the extension of the Kingdom through missions, the conduct of

a particular task, or the work of an organization. For instance clauses could be framed in a social litany such as, "By Thy life as a citizen, by Thy compassion and mercy, by Thy stern resistance of evil, by Thy rebuking of injustice"; (response) "Good Lord, deliver us." It is also customary to have several clauses naming those dangers and evils from which we pray for deliverance.

3. In the third part of the litany the direct petitions are made in groups of related requests, to which the worshipers respond in some such way as, "We beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord." A good litany can be made by taking any long prayer, such as the social prayers of Dr. Rauschenbusch, and making each clause a separate petition in the litany. The clauses in this part of the litany begin "That it may please Thee to—," but any other form could be used. This introductory phrase should not be varied. The importance of regularity in usage lies in the fact that a change in form of petition usually indicates a change in the response.

There is no reason why the litany should be wholly petition. The element of thanksgiving can be fittingly introduced by the use of the response, "We thank Thee, O God," after each statement of a ground for thankfulness.

4. The close of the litany is usually by a responsory, the Lord's Prayer, other prayers, and a blessing. A good plan here is to have a prayer of

thanksgiving, which shows that by faith we anticipate the granting of the requests we have made. The "General Thanksgiving" given in Part III is very effective if said in unison.

One comment might be made here which will apply to all forms of service where the same response is made a number of times. The leader announces, "The response is—," and proceeds with the first petition. If the form of service is unknown to the worshipers, the leader should say the response with the others the first time that any change is made in the form of response.

No other form of service binds the worshipers together as much as does a litany. In some of the early litanies there was also a distinct recognition of the communion of saints. The whole Church, militant and at rest, is spiritually present. To keep this before one's mind, and also the mediatorship of Jesus Christ, it might be well to use as an opening sentence Heb. 12: 22-24: "Ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable hosts of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant."

In a litany service litany hymns should be sung; indeed other hymns seem out of place. Every hymnal groups these hymns, but there are sure to

be some very useful hymns not so grouped with which the leader should acquaint himself.

### *Service of Intercession*

A service of intercession is related to the litany in that the leader prepares carefully the petitions the worshipers are to offer. However, they do not voice their requests by responses as in the litany, after which the leader goes on to the next petition, but pray silently for the objects named. The leader introduces the petition with the words "Let us pray for (or that)—," and "Let us give thanks for (or that)—".

This is quite a usual form of prayer as part of a longer service, but is not often made a service in itself. A frequent mistake is made in leaving too long a time for the silent prayer. People's minds move rapidly, and too long a pause gives opportunity for wandering thoughts. The sudden breaking in on one's prayer by the announcement of a new topic is disconcerting, and as a way of avoiding this and bringing the silent petitions to a close there might well be used the responsory:

*Leader*, "O Lord, hear our prayer."

*Answer*, "And let our cry come unto Thee."

*Leader*, "Let us pray that—," etc.

Or again, a long litany hymn can be chosen, and at the close of each period of silent prayer a verse can be sung. The sounding of a musical note in

this case gives the warning that the period of silent petition is over. Especially useful for this purpose is the hymn, "Saviour, when in dust to Thee."

The beginning and ending of such a service can be arranged to suit the leader. It is far more flexible than a litany, for it has no liturgical precedents to determine its form.

### *Services of the Commandments and the Beatitudes*

The recitation of the Commandments has always formed part of the Communion Service in many churches. In 1892 a Commission of the Protestant Episcopal Church recommended the substitution of the Beatitudes in certain cases, but the change was not adopted. In 1905 the Committee of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (North) recommended the recitation of the Commandments and the Beatitudes in the form of two beautiful services. The reader is advised to study these services in "The Book of Common Worship," in order to learn the opening sentences, responses, etc. Briefly stated, the services in each case begin with opening sentences from the Psalter in the form of a responsory, and a brief prayer of invocation. The Commandments are recited in the form in which they occur in Exodus 20: 1-17. The response is, "Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law"; except after the last commandment, where the last clause becomes, "And write all these Thy

laws in our hearts, we beseech Thee." The Beatitudes are as given by Matthew in the Sermon on the Mount, 5: 8-10. The response is, "Lord, be gracious unto us, and help us to obtain this blessing," except that after the last is said, "Grant unto us Thy Holy Spirit, O God, and enable us to obtain all these blessings, through Jesus Christ our Lord." In case the group is unfamiliar with the form of response, it would be well to keep the same response throughout. After the recitation of the Commandments the leader gives the Summary of the Law, (Matt. 22: 37-40), preceding it with the words, "Hear also what our Lord Jesus Christ saith." Prayers and a blessing conclude the service.

A little booklet of "Hymns and Prayers for the Use of the Army and Navy"<sup>2</sup> makes the valuable suggestion that a shortened form of the Ten Commandments be used at any service at the discretion of the Chaplain. This form is as follows:

*Leader.* God spake these words, and said: I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt have none other God beside Me. Thou shalt not make to thyself any image, to worship it or to serve it. Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain. Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath-day. Six days shalt thou labor and do all that thou hast to do. Honor thy father and thy mother. Thou shalt not kill; neither shalt thou bear false witness against

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<sup>2</sup> Houghton Mifflin Company.

thy neighbor. Thou shalt not commit adultery; neither shalt thou desire thy neighbor's wife. Thou shalt not steal; neither shalt thou covet thy neighbor's goods.

*Answer.* Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep Thy laws.

*Leader.* And all these commandments our Lord Jesus Christ briefly comprehended in these words: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. And thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

*Answer.* Lord, have mercy upon us, and write all these Thy laws in our hearts, we beseech Thee.

#### *Penitential Service*

This type of service gives opportunity to a group of people who have been deeply stirred, to give common voice to their confession of sin. Its form will vary to suit the occasion, but it might well have as an expression of sin and repentance the 51st Psalm, omitting the last two verses. A helpful way to render this Psalm (and in fact all Psalms) is for each verse to be read responsively, and not for the verses to be alternated. In Hebrew poetry the second half of a verse repeats the idea of the first, supplements it, or gives its contrast. Thus in the first verse of this Psalm the first half, "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy loving kindness,"

is repeated and supplemented in the second half, "According to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions." Dividing each verse into two parts seems to have been characteristic of the antiphonal singing of the Psalms in the Temple in the Jewish services which our Lord attended. Of course, some Psalms are not in this metrical form.

This service will contain a confession of sin, either in the familiar words of the "General Confession," or the even more penitential words of the great prayer "Turn thou us, O good Lord" (see Part III). Both are said in unison. An effective form of confession is the singing of a hymn, as already suggested; e.g., "Bowing low in deep contrition," "Just as I am," etc.

It is hardly to be expected at such services as we have in mind that a minister will be present to declare the remission of sins, but following the confession the leader might well read the "Comfortable Words" from the Communion Office in the Book of Common Prayer, or the form given in Morning Service in the Book of Common Worship, omitting the last line. (Both these forms are given in Part III). Or else he might use the prayer in the Penitential Office of the Book of Common Prayer, "O God, whose nature and property is ever to have mercy and to forgive; Receive our humble petitions; and though we be tied and bound with the chain of our sins, yet let the pitifulness of thy great mercy

loose us; for the honor of Jesus Christ, our Mediator and Advocate. Amen."

Sentences and responsories appropriate to confession of sin can easily be arranged. The central portion of the *Gloria in Excelsis* is unsurpassed in its confession and cry for mercy.

*Leader*, "O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ; O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sins of the world,"

*Answer*, "Have mercy upon us."

*Leader*, "Thou that takest away the sins of the world,"

*Answer*, "Reeeeive our prayer."

*Leader*, "Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father,"

*Answer*, "Have mercy upon us."

The whole *Gloria* is appropriate to the service, for it gives a burst of praise and penitence mingled, with which a penitential service could appropriately be closed.

The Lord's Prayer should have a place in this service, expressing, as it does, our common danger of yielding to temptation.

An appropriate ascription with which this service can conclude is Jude 24, 25 (See Part III).

#### *Service of Meditation*

If there is anything really necessary in our spirit-

ual life it is that we shall follow our Lord apart and rest awhile. This means that we must revive the almost forgotten habit of meditation. Because it is so unusual, a public meditation is hard to conduct. Certainly it can never be helpfully conducted unless the leader has spent long hours on his knees with his topic in the presence of God. As the very essence of conducting a public meditation consists in thought-provoking and picturesque presentation of the theme, and as it must be slowly and deliberately done, with time for meditation on the part of the worshipers, it is evident that no words can be wasted. The fatal glibness of speech, which is characteristic of the extempore or unprepared speaker, would ruin a meditation. Every word must be weighed before utterance, and most of them must be discarded.

Two forms of meditation have come down to us from the past. Those who are curious as to their names and the full rigor of their personal conduct will find them described best in F. W. Faber's "Growth in Holiness," Chapter 15. For our purposes let us merely give them in outline.

## I

One method of meditation consists of choosing a topic, and (1) studying Christ's attitude toward it and teaching upon it; (2) adoring Him for His revelation and confessing our shortcomings in reach-

ing His standard; and (3) applying the teaching to our lives and stirring up our wills to make it a part of our character and conduct.

## II

The other method of meditation consists in (1) contemplation of some characteristic of our Lord or the saints and heroes of the Scriptures, endeavoring by the imagination to present a clear picture before our mind's eye; (2) consideration of the picture we have drawn, trying to grasp with our minds its full significance for us, until our affections are aglow; and (3) resolution to embody that characteristic in our own natures, and by effort of will to realize in life the picture we have seen.

As a variation from word picturing, which is extremely difficult, it is suggested we occasionally place before us a famous picture such as Holman Hunt's "Light of the World," and endeavor to catch the subtle meaning of each expression and attitude and object in the picture.

The parts of the meditations can be separated one from another by an appropriate hymn, but it should be sung very softly, and perhaps not in its entirety. Under no circumstances should the hymn turn the thoughts of those present into other channels. One verse might be appropriate, another

not. Many hymns of a meditative type like "Take time to be holy," could serve for the opening hymn.

The third part of each meditation can best be conducted by the leader's asking pertinent questions about the conduct and character of all present as related to the topic or spiritual characteristic under consideration. He should include himself in these questions. Thus "Are we—?" and "Have we done—?" A pause is given for self-examination and resolution. These questions are especially hard to prepare, for the leader has to think himself into the place of all before him, lest the self-examination be inappropriate and miss fire.

Prayer concludes the service. It is best not to have a closing hymn, and the group should not disperse with conversation and the ordinary exchange of pleasantries, but should go quietly out of the room, or settle down with seriousness to the business in hand.

A meditation demands so close a grip on the attention that the leader will do well to let no one take part in it besides himself, save for the singing of hymns and the making of responses. Further, in his own preparation, he will first go through the meditation for himself, before retracing his steps to work it out for public use.

#### *Service of Silence*

Akin to the meditation, but still less familiar to

most people, is a service of silence. The name is to be taken literally and absolute silence is maintained, unless the intention is to model the service after the meetings of the Society of Friends, and speak and pray as the Spirit gives utterance.

Perhaps the best way to explain what is meant is to quote a description of just such a service—that gathering in far-away New Zealand which was the germ of the modern movement known as “The Fellowship of Silence.” “The September afternoon was drawing to evening, and the dusk was settling over the land, as we passed into the silent church, a little group. It was divine service without its common human aids. No choir sang to us, no preacher ascended the pulpit, no stoled and vested priest directed our approach to the Great Presence. We entered, we knelt, we were still, and our souls began to be united with a new and strange sense of fellowship in that silence; and as the silence deepened, there grew a deeper sense, the sense of the Presence, and the work of prayer, ever hard, became easy. Human aid we had, though not of the common sort. Seeking God side by side, every man helped his fellow. The half-hour sped away before any sound broke in upon our stillness, but when at length we rose, and passed out into the world again, we carried with us the knowledge that we had been near God.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> “Fellowship of Silence,” pp. 236, 7.

The whole philosophy of this type of service can be given by two other quotations. First, the work of prayer is made markedly easier in fellowship than in isolation. "The blending of silence with fellowship seems to create an atmosphere in which the sense of the spiritual in man is set free."<sup>4</sup> Second, the silence is not passivity. "The will is at its highest activity. As an insect poised in the air, seemingly motionless, with wings in such rapid motion that they are invisible, is all the while sustained by its resistance to the air, so the will in this listening is not passive. It holds fast to its rest in God by sustained resistance to all that would drag it down, or invade its silence. This is very far from making the mind a blank. It is the filling of the mind with God to the exclusion of all else."<sup>5</sup> Herein lies the difference between the services of meditation and silence. In the former we strive to think new thoughts, in the latter to hear them.

Some procedure, naturally the simplest, is necessary. If the silence is to unite everyone in one common line of thought, the subject is announced. If not, each worshiper proceeds as he sees fit. The Lord's Prayer repeated with great deliberation begins the silence. The period may be divided into four divisions: (1) the preparation, when as rapidly as possible the body is forgotten and the cares of

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<sup>4</sup> "Fellowship of Silence," p. 19.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 180.

the past moments are put aside; (2) the stilling of the mind and soul, which can be accomplished by consideration of some attribute of God; (3) the listening, when we receive His messages; and (4) the outpouring of love and adoration and resolution. At the appointed time the leader begins the *Nunc Dimittis*, in which all join as the conclusion of the service.

Several different uses of silence can be listed to show the variety which can be introduced into this type of service.

1. The true "Quaker meeting": silence preceding vocal prayer or speaking.
2. Free Silence: silence maintained, but without any subject of thought or prayer.
3. Directed Silence: silence maintained, but with a subject announced for contemplation and intercession.
4. Silent Intercession: similar to the service of intercession already outlined, with longer silences.
5. Half-silent meetings: in which the time is divided between vocal prayer and silence.

There is perhaps more warrant in Scripture for the observance of silence than we are accustomed to suppose. Often are we told that the Word of the Lord came to the prophet in silence. The psalmist frequently refers to silence. Most wonderful of all is the scene in the Book of Revelation (8:1). After the mighty host of the redeemed had shouted "Salva-

tion to our God," the Angel opened the seventh seal, and "there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour."

### *Song Service*

It was suggested above that a service consisting of the singing of hymns called for one after the other "from the floor" was hardly satisfactory. This does not mean that a service composed almost wholly of song is not helpful; far from it. But it does mean that such services should be carefully planned, and the hymns chosen should bear some relation to each other. Or if a preference is revealed for a particular hymn, reason should be given for the request. The value of this lies in the human touch thus afforded. Thus the calling for preferences can be done in ways which result not in a hodge-podge of unrelated hymns, but in an intimate Christian fellowship; e. g., "What hymn do you hum to yourself when alone, and why do you prefer it?" or "What hymn is connected with the deepest spiritual experience in your life?"

The best song services are those in which the attention of the worshipers is called to the meaning of the hymns they are to sing, so that they sing them more understandingly, and not as mere vehicles of a favorite tune. This can be done in two ways: (1) relating the circumstances under which the hymns were written and telling something of the authors' lives and characters, and (2) expounding

their teaching and showing the development from verse to verse. Oftentimes a very effective talk can be made by developing the thought of a single hymn between verses, having each verse sung after its special teaching has been pointed out. The special value of this lies in the fact that many hymns are in themselves complete doctrinal units or describe some great spiritual experience.

Dr. T. R. Glover has recently pointed out why hymns are so valuable; in fact, he makes a good hymnal an argument for the truth of Christianity, for it is a record of spiritual experiences which must be accounted for. "The great hymns of the Church—such as the *Dies Irae* of Thomas of Celano, or Bernard's *Jesu dulcis memoria*, or Toplady's *Rock of Ages*—are transcripts from life, made by deep-going and serious minds. The writers are recording, with deep conviction of its worth, what they have discovered in experience. A man who takes Christ seriously and will 'examine life,' will often find in those great hymns, it may be with some surprise, an anticipation of his own experience—as Bunyan did in Luther's Commentary on *Galatians*. Livingstone had *Jesu dulcis memoria*—the Latin of it—ringing in his head as he traveled in unexplored Africa. Men who did such work—work that lasts and is recognized again and again to be genuine by others busy in the same field—cannot have been random, light-hearted creatures. They were, in

fact, men tested in life, men of experience—of wide and deep experience—men with a gift for living, developed in heart as well as in brain. . . . Where we find a great hymn we may be sure of finding a great experience behind it.”<sup>6</sup>

By way of passing comment it might be observed that it is a pity that the singing of hymns is taken as the time to do all the odd jobs of a meeting, such as the airing of the room, the distribution of cards, the taking up of a collection, the shifting of the audience, etc. This distracting use of a devotional element, however, rarely occurs in the small and brief group meetings, concerning which this manual is written.

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It is hoped that the foregoing fulfils its aim. No effort has been made to lay down hard and fast rules of liturgical procedure, but so to describe the elements of worship and the types of worship, that any one with a reverent mind and a sense of order and proportion can construct services in which others can share, even though unfamiliar with any ritual. There remains to collect in one place for the sake of convenience all those liturgical forms which have been referred to in the body of the manual.

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<sup>6</sup> “The Jesus of History,” pp. 212, 18.

### **PART III**

## **PRACTICAL AIDS FOR DEVOTIONAL MEETINGS**



## PART III

### PRACTICAL AIDS FOR DEVOTIONAL MEETINGS

#### **A Selection of Sentences from Scripture**

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. *Rev. 4: 8.*

O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness ; let the whole earth stand in awe of Him. *Psalm 96: 9.*

O come, let us worship and bow down : let us kneel before the Lord our maker. Know ye that the Lord He is God : it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves ; we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture. *Psalm 95: 6; 100: 3.*

Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy ; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. *Isa. 57: 15.*

The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth : for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is Spirit : and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. *John 4: 23, 24.*

The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon

Him, to all that call upon Him in truth. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear Him; He also will hear their cry, and will save them. *Psalm 145:18, 19.*

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. *Matt. 7:7, 8.*

Where two or three are gathered together in My Name, *saith the Lord Jesus*, there am I in the midst of them. *Matt. 18:20.*

Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. *Rev. 21:3.*

Come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord. And He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His path. *Isa. 2:5, 3.*

O send out Thy light and Thy truth, that they may lead me, and bring me unto Thy holy hill, and to Thy dwelling. *Psalm 43:3.*

Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be always acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer. *Psalm 19:14, 15.*

Let my prayer be set forth in Thy sight as the incense; and let the lifting up of my hands be an evening sacrifice. *Psalm 141:2.*

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. *Col. 3:1.*

Watch ye, for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly He find you sleeping. *Mark 13:35, 36.*

Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. *Matt. 3:2.*

Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. *Isa. 40:3.*

From the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my Name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my Name, and a pure offering: for my Name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts. *Mal. 1:11.*

The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. *Rev. 22:17.*

#### BEFORE A LITANY OR SERVICE OF INTERCESSION

Seeing that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. *Heb. 4:14, 16.*

Christ is not entered into the holy places made

## 64 *The Conduct of Brief Devotional Meetings*

with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. *Heb. 9:24.*

Ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable hosts of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant. *Heb. 12:22-24.*

### BEFORE A CORPORATE CONFESSION OF SIN

Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. *Isa. 55:6, 7.*

When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive. *Ezek. 18:27.*

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise. *Psalm 51:17.*

Rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth Him of the evil. *Joel 2:13.*

To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against Him; neither have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in His laws which He set before us. *Dan. 9:9, 10.*

O Lord, correct me, but with judgment; not in Thine anger, lest Thou bring me to nothing. *Jer. 10:24. Psalm 6:1.*

I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. *Luke 15:18, 19.*

Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, O Lord; for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified. *Psalm 143:2.*

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us; but if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. *I John 1:8, 9.*

Let us humbly confess our sins unto Almighty God.

### **Confessions**

#### **A GENERAL CONFESSION**

(To be said by Leader and people in unison.)

Almighty and most merciful Father; We have erred, and strayed from Thy ways like lost sheep.

We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts. We have offended against Thy holy laws. We have left undone those things which we ought to have done; And we have done those things which we ought not to have done; And there is no health in us. But Thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable offenders. Spare Thou those, O God, who confess their faults. Restore Thou those who are penitent; According to Thy promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesus our Lord. And grant, O most merciful Father, for His sake; That we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life, To the glory of Thy holy Name. Amen.

*Or This*

We confess to Thee, O God, Father Almighty, that we have sinned against Thee in thought, word, and deed, by our own grievous fault. We repent ourselves of these our transgressions: and we beseech Thee to grant us forgiveness for the past, and grace to amend our lives in time to come; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**A CORPORATE PRAYER OF PENITENCE**

Turn Thou us, O good Lord, and so shall we be turned. Be favorable, O Lord, be favorable to Thy people, Who turn to Thee in weeping, fasting, and praying. For Thou art a merciful God, full of compassion, long-suffering, and of great pity.

Thou sparest when we deserve punishment, And in Thy wrath thinkest upon mercy. Spare Thy people, good Lord, spare them, and let not Thine heritage be brought to confusion. Hear us, O Lord, for Thy mercy is great, and after the multitude of Thy mercies look upon us; Through the merits and mediation of Thy blessed Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**THE FIFTY-FIRST PSALM**

(The Leader repeats the first half of each verse, and the people the second.)

Have mercy upon me, O God, after Thy great goodness: according to the multitude of Thy mercies do away mine offences.

Wash me throughly from my wickedness: and cleanse me from my sin.

For I acknowledge my faults: and my sin is ever before me.

Against Thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight: that Thou mightest be justified in Thy saying, and clear when Thou art judged.

Behold, I was shapen in wickedness: and in sin hath my mother conceived me.

But lo, Thou requirest truth in the inward parts: and shalt make me to understand wisdom secretly.

Thou shalt purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Thou shalt make me hear of joy and gladness: that the bones which Thou hast broken may rejoice.

Turn Thy face from my sins: and put out all my misdeeds.

Make me a clean heart, O God: and renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from Thy presence: and take not Thy holy Spirit from me.

O give me the comfort of Thy help again: and stablish me with Thy free Spirit.

Then shall I teach Thy ways unto the wicked: and sinners shall be converted unto Thee.

Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, Thou that art the God of my health: and my tongue shall sing of Thy righteousness.

Thou shalt open my lips, O Lord: and my mouth shall show Thy praise.

For Thou desirest no sacrifice, else would I give it Thee: but Thou delightest not in burnt-offerings.

The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit: a broken and contrite heart, O God, shalt Thou not despise.

### A CIVIC CONFESION

*Taken from the ninth chapter of the Book of Daniel*

(To be said by Leader and people in unison.)

O Lord, the great and dreadful God,  
Which keepeth covenant and mercy

With them that love Thee and keep Thy commandments:

We have sinned and have dealt perversely,  
And have done wickedly and have rebelled,  
Even turning aside from Thy precepts and from  
Thy judgments.

O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto Thee,  
But unto us confusion of face as at this day,  
Because we have sinned against Thee.

To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgive-  
nesses

Though we have rebelled against Him:

Neither have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our  
God

To walk in His ways which He set before us.

O Lord, according to all Thy righteousness,  
Let Thine anger and Thy fury be turned away;  
Because for our sins and for the iniquities of our  
fathers,

Thy people have become a reproach, to all that are  
round about us.

Now, therefore, O our God, hearken unto the prayer  
of Thy servants, and to our supplications,  
And cause Thy face to shine upon Thy sanctuary.

O, our God, incline Thine ear and hear:  
Open Thine eyes and behold our desolations,  
And the city that is called by Thy name.  
We do not present our supplication before Thee  
For our righteousnesses, but for Thy great mercies.

O Lord, hear ; O Lord, forgive ;  
O Lord, hearken and do, defer not,  
For Thine own sake, O our God.

### **The Comfortable Words**

(To be read by the Leader after confession.)

God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Hear the gracious words of our Lord Jesus Christ unto all that truly repent and turn to Him :

Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.

*As given in "The Book of Common Worship."*

Hear what comfortable words our Saviour Christ saith unto all who truly turn to Him.

Come unto Me, all ye that travail and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you. *Matt. 11:28.*

So God loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, to the end that all that believe in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. *John 3:16.*

Hear also what Saint Paul saith.

This is a true saying, and worthy of all men to be received, That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. *I Tim. 1:15.*

Hear also what Saint John saith.

If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He is the Propitiation for our sins. *I John 2:1, 2.*

*As given in "The Book of Common Prayer."*

### **Prayers to Follow Confession**

O God, whose nature and property is ever to have mercy and to forgive; Receive our humble petitions; and though we be tied and bound with the chain of our sins, yet let the pitifulness of Thy great mercy loose us; for the honor of Jesus Christ, our Mediator and Advocate. Amen.

*Or This*

Grant, we beseech Thee, merciful Lord, to Thy faithful people pardon and peace, that we may be cleansed from all our sins, and serve Thee with a quiet mind; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **The Lord's Prayer**

Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, As it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil: For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

### **Ancient Hymns and Canticles**

#### **GLORIA PATRI**

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son; and to the Holy Ghost:

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

#### **GLORIA IN EXCELSIS**

Glory be to God on high: and on earth peace, good will towards men.

We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee: we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory.

O Lord God, heavenly King: God the Father Almighty.

O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ: O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,

That takest away the sins of the world: have mercy upon us.

Thou that takest away the sins of the world: receive our prayer.

Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father: have mercy upon us.

For Thou only art holy: Thou only art the Lord. Thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost: art most high in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

**TE DEUM LAUDAMUS**

We praise Thee, O God: we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord.

All the earth doth worship Thee: the Father everlasting.

To Thee all Angels cry aloud: the Heavens, and all the Powers therein;

To Thee Cherubim and Seraphim: continually do cry,

Holy, Holy, Holy: Lord God of Sabaoth;

Heaven and earth are full of the Majesty: of Thy glory.

The glorious company of the Apostles: praise Thee.

The goodly fellowship of the Prophets: praise Thee.

The noble army of Martyrs: praise Thee.

The holy Church throughout all the world: doth acknowledge Thee;

The Father: of an infinite Majesty;

Thine adorable, true: and only Son;

Also the Holy Ghost: the Comforter.

Thou art the King of Glory: O Christ.

Thou art the everlasting Son: of the Father.

When Thou tookest upon Thee to deliver man:  
Thou didst humble Thyself to be born of a Virgin.

When Thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death:  
Thou didst open the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers.

Thou sittest at the right hand of God: in the glory of the Father.

We believe that Thou shalt come: to be our Judge.

We therefore pray Thee, help Thy servants: whom Thou hast redeemed with Thy precious blood.

Make them to be numbered with Thy Saints: in glory everlasting.

O Lord, save Thy people: and bless Thine heritage.

Govern them: and lift them up for ever.

Day by day: we magnify Thee;

And we worship Thy Name: ever, world without end.

Vouchsafe, O Lord: to keep us this day without sin.

O Lord, have mercy upon us: have mercy upon us.

O Lord let Thy mercy be upon us: as our trust is in Thee.

O Lord, in Thee have I trusted: let me never be confounded.

**BENEDICTUS. LUKE 1: 68 ff.**

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel: for He hath visited and redeemed His people;

And hath raised up a mighty salvation for us: in the house of His servant David;

As He spake by the mouth of His holy prophets: which have been since the world began;

That we should be saved from our enemies: and from the hand of all that hate us.

*(The remainder is often omitted.)*

To perform the mercy promised to our fore-fathers: and to remember His holy covenant;

To perform the oath which He sware to our fore-father Abraham: that He would give us;

That we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies: might serve Him without fear;

In holiness and righteousness before Him: all the days of our life.

And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways;

To give knowledge of salvation unto His people: for the remission of their sins,

Through the tender mercy of our God: whereby the day-spring from on high hath visited us;

To give light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death: and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

**MAGNIFICAT. LUKE 1: 46 ff.**

My soul doth magnify the Lord: and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

For He hath regarded: the lowliness of His hand-maiden.

For behold, from henceforth: all generations shall call me blessed.

For He that is mighty hath magnified me: and holy is His Name.

And His mercy is on them that fear Him: throughout all generations.

He hath showed strength with His arm: He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

He hath put down the mighty from their seat: and hath exalted the humble and meek.

He hath filled the hungry with good things: and the rich He hath sent empty away.

He remembering His mercy hath holpen His servant Israel: as He promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed, for ever.

**NUNC DIMITTIS. LUKE 2: 29 ff.**

Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace: according to Thy word.

For mine eyes have seen: Thy salvation,

Which Thou hast prepared: before the face of all people;

To be a light to lighten the Gentiles: and to be the glory of Thy people Israel.

**Doxologies**

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Him, all creatures here below;

Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

L. M.

*Thomas Ken.*

To God, the Father, Son,  
And Spirit, One in Three,  
Be glory, as it was, is now,  
And shall forever be.

S. M.

*John Wesley.*

To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,  
The God whom we adore,  
Be glory, as it was, is now,  
And shall be evermore.

C. M.

*Tate and Brady.*

Sing we to our God above,  
Praise eternal as His love;  
Praise Him, all ye heavenly host—  
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

7a.

*Charles Wesley.*

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,  
God for ever one,  
Praise to Thine eternal merit,  
While the ages run.

8.5.8.5.

### **The Apostles' Creed**

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord; Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin

Mary, Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, dead, and buried, He descended into hell,\* The third day He rose again from the dead, He ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty, From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost: The holy Catholic Church; The Communion of Saints; The Forgiveness of sins; The Resurrection of the body; And the Life everlasting. Amen.

\*or *He went into the place of departed spirits.*

### Responsories

#### RESPONSORY BEFORE PRAISE

Leader: Now bless the Lord our God;

Answer: *And praise His glorious Name.*

O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good;

*For His mercy endureth forever.*

O Lord, open Thou our lips;

*And our mouth shall show forth Thy praise.*

#### RESPONSORY BEFORE PRAYER

Leader: The Lord be with you;

Answer: *And with thy spirit.*

Let us pray.

O God, make clean our hearts within us;

*And take not Thy Holy Spirit from us.*

O Lord, deal not with us according to our sins;

*Neither reward us according to our iniquities.*

O Lord, let Thy mercy be shown upon us;  
*As we do put our trust in Thee.*

O Lord, show Thy mercy upon us;  
*And grant us Thy salvation.*

O Lord, hear our prayer;  
*And let our cry come unto Thee.*

#### **RESPONSORY IN A SERVICE OF A CIVIC NATURE**

**Leader:** Our help is in the Name of the Lord;

**Answer:** *Who hath made heaven and earth.*

Except the Lord build the house;  
*Their labor is but lost that build it.*

Except the Lord keep the city;  
*The watchman waketh in vain.*

The Lord our God be with us;  
*As He was with our fathers.*

O God, make speed to save us;  
*O Lord, make haste to help us.*

#### **RESPONSORY IN A MISSIONARY SERVICE**

**Leader:** Blessed be the Name of the Lord;

**Answer:** *Henceforth, world without end.*

O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is gracious;

*And His mercy endureth forever.*

O, that men would praise the Lord for His goodness;

*And declare the wonders that He doeth for the children of men.*

They cry unto the Lord in their trouble;  
*And He delivereth them out of their distress.*

He sendeth His word and healeth them;  
*And they are saved from their destruction.*

He healeth them that are broken in heart;  
*And giveth medicine to heal their sickness.*

The eyes of all wait upon Thee, O Lord;  
*And Thou givest them their meat in due season.*

Thou openest Thine hand;  
*And fillest all things living with plenteousness.*

Endue Thy ministers with righteousness;  
*And send forth laborers into Thy harvest.*

O Lord, take the heathen for Thine inheritance;

*And the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession.*

#### RESPONSORY AT THE CLOSE OF A DEVOTIONAL MEETING

Leader: Whatsoever ye do, in word or deed;

Answer: *Do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus.*

Be kindly affectioned one to another;  
*In honor preferring one another.*  
The peace of the Lord be always with you;  
*And with thy spirit.*  
Let us depart in peace;  
*In the name of the Lord.*

### **A General Thanksgiving**

(To be said in unison)

Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we, Thine unworthy servants, do give Thee most humble and hearty thanks for all Thy goodness and loving-kindness to us, and to all men. We bless Thee for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all, for Thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. And, we beseech Thee, give us that due sense of all Thy mercies, that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful; and that we show forth Thy praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up our selves to Thy service, and by walking before Thee in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with Thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory, world without end. *Amen.*

### **Opening Invocations of a Litany**

O God the Father, Creator of heaven and earth;  
*Have mercy upon us.*

O God the Son, Redeemer of the world;

*Have mercy upon us.*

O God the Holy Spirit, Sanctifier of the faithful;

*Have mercy upon us.*

O holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, one God;

*Have mercy upon us.*

### Blessings

The Lord bless us and keep us. The Lord make His face to shine upon us, and be gracious unto us. The Lord lift up His countenance upon us, and give us peace, both now and evermore. *Amen.* *Num. 6: 24-26.*

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with us all evermore. *Amen.* *II Cor. 13: 14.*

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with our spirits. *Amen.* *Phil. 4: 23.*

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work to do His will, working in us that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. *Amen.* *Heb. 13: 20, 21.*

Now the Lord of peace Himself give us peace at all times in all ways. The Lord be with us all. *Amen.* *II Thess. 3: 16.*

THE MIZPAH

(To be said in unison)

The Lord watch between me and thee when we are absent one from another. *Gen. 31: 49.*

**Ascriptions**

Now unto Him that is able to guard us from stumbling, and to set us before the presence of His glory without blemish in exceeding joy, to the only God our Saviour, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and power, before all time, and now, and for evermore. *Amen. Jude 24, 25.*

Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be unto our God for ever and ever. *Amen. Rev. 7: 12.*

Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. *Amen. I Tim. 1: 17.*

Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. *Amen. Eph. 3: 20, 21.*

O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past tracing out! For of Him, and through Him, and unto Him, are all things. To Him be the glory for ever. *Amen. Rom. 11: 33, 36.*

**The Christian Year**

	1917	1918	1919	1920	1921	1922	1923	1924	1925	1926
ADVENT SUNDAY . . . . .	Dec. 2	Dec. 1	Nov. 30	Nov. 28	Nov. 27	Dec. 3	Dec. 2	Nov. 30	Nov. 29	Nov. 28
CHRISTMAS DAY . . . . .	—	—	—	—	—	December 26	—	—	—	—
CIRCUMCISION . . . . .	—	—	—	—	—	—	January 1	—	—	—
EPHESIANS* . . . . .	—	—	—	—	—	—	January 6	—	—	—
PRESENTATION IN TEMPLE† . . .	Feb. 21	Feb. 13	Mar. 5	Feb. 17	Feb. 9	Mar. 1	Feb. 14	Mar. 5	Mar. 10	Feb. 17
ASH WEDNESDAY . . . . .	April 1	Mar. 24	April 13	Mar. 28	Mar. 20	April 9	Mar. 25	April 13	April 5	Mar. 28
PALM SUNDAY . . . . .	April 6	Mar. 29	April 18	April 2	Mar. 25	April 14	Mar. 30	April 18	April 10	April 2
GOOD FRIDAY . . . . .	April 8	Mar. 31	April 20	April 4	Mar. 27	April 16	April 1	April 20	April 12	April 4
EASTER SUNDAY . . . . .	May 17	May 9	May 29	May 13	May 5	May 25	May 10	May 29	June 3	May 13
ASCENSION DAY . . . . .	May 27	May 19	June 8	May 23	May 15	June 4	May 20	June 8	June 13	May 23
WHITSUNDAY . . . . .	June 3	May 26	June 15	May 30	May 22	June 11	May 27	June 15	June 20	May 30
TRANSFIGURATION . . . . .	—	—	—	—	—	—	August 6	—	—	—
ALL SAINTS' DAY . . . . .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	November 1	—	—

\* Or the Manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles.

† Commonly called The Purification of Saint Mary the Virgin.

### **Selections of Scripture, Psalms, and Hymns**

(When *and* occurs between references, they are to be read as one passage. Separate references in the same book are divided by semicolons. Hymns are suggested which are given in most hymnals.)

#### *Advent Season*

Isa. 42:1-13; 52:1-12. Ezek. 37:24-28. Joel 2:1-14 and 28-32 and 3:14-21. Micah 4. Matt. 21:1-17; 24:1-25:13; 26:57-68. Luke 4:16-30; 12:35-59. John 16:16-24. I Cor. 4:1-5. I Thess. 4:13-5:11. I John 2:18-29. Rev. 22:6-21.

Psalms 24, 50, 68, 96, 97, 98.

Hymns: Come, Thou long-expected Jesus

Hark, the glad sound, the Saviour comes  
Thou art coming, O my Saviour  
Lo, He comes with clouds descending  
Rejoice, rejoice, believers  
Thy Kingdom come, O God  
O, Jesus, Thou art standing.

#### *Christmas-tide*

Gen. 8:9-19. Isa. 7:10-17; 9:1-7; 10:33-11:10.  
The accounts of the birth of Jesus. John 1:1-18.  
Rom. 5:12-21; 8:1-30. Gal. 4:1-7. Phil. 2:1-11.  
Rev. 12.

Psalms 8, 85, 89:1-36, 110, 132.

Hymns: O little town of Bethlehem

It came upon the midnight clear  
Angels from the realms of glory  
Joy to the world  
Hark, the herald angels sing  
Come O, all ye faithful.

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### *Circumcision*

Gen. 17:1-14. Luke 2:15-21. Rom. 4:7-25. Col. 2:6-15.

Psalms 65, 90, 103.

Hymns: Jesus, Name of wondrous love

How sweet the Name of Jesus sounds  
At the Name of Jesus, every knee shall bow  
Thou didst leave Thy throne

### *Epiphany*

Isa. 49. Matt. 2:1-12. Eph. 3.

Psalms 47, 48, 72.

Hymns: As with gladness men of old

Brightest and best of the sons of the morning  
From the Eastern mountains  
Watchman, tell us of the night

### *Presentation in the Temple*

I Sam. 1:19-28 and 2:18-21. Mal. 3:1-5. Luke 2:22-40. Rev. 1:9-18.

Psalms 84, 122, 134, 138.

Hymns: Hail to the Lord Who comes

In His Temple now behold Him  
From every stormy wind that blows  
Take my life and let it be consecrated,  
Lord, to Thee  
O Master, let me walk with Thee

*Lenten Season*

II Sam. 12:1-23. Isa. 58. Jer. 7:1-20; 9:1-24.  
Ezek. 14. Joel 2:1-17. Jonah 3. Micah 6. Matt.  
6:9-18; 15:1-20; 23. Luke 3:1-20; 7:36-50; 13:1-9;  
15; 18:9-14; 22:31-34 and 54-62. John 8:1-11.  
Rom. 1:18—2:16; 6; 7:7-25. Gal. 5:16-6:5. Heb.  
9:11-28. James 1:12-27; 3. I John 3:1-12. Rev.  
22:10-15.

Psalms 6, 10, 25, 32, 38, 51, 69: 1-18, 77, 88, 102,  
130, 139, 143.

Hymns: Forty days and forty nights  
Christian, dost thou see them  
Saviour, when in dust to Thee  
Just as I am, without one plea  
Lord Jesus, I long to be perfectly whole  
Lord, at Thy mercy seat, humbly I fall  
Rock of Ages, cleft for me  
Pass me not, O gentle Saviour  
Though your sins be as scarlet  
Out of my bondage, sorrow and night  
I heard the voice of Jesus say  
Jesus, and shall it ever be  
O the bitter shame and sorrow  
Come, ye disconsolate, where'er ye languish  
(For hymns of confession see *Penitence*)

*Holy Week (Palm Sunday to Maundy Thursday  
inclusive)*

Zech. 9:9-17. Matt. 21:1-17. Gen. 3:1-16. Lev.  
16:6-25. Exodus 12:1-36; 16. Matt. 26:1-29.

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**I Cor. 11:17-29.** **John 6; 13; 14; 15.** **Mark 14:26-50.** The accounts of the trials of Jesus. **Phil. 2:5-11.**

**Psalms 24, 110, 31, 35, 38, 40, 23.**

**Hymns:** Ride on, ride on in majesty

All glory, laud and honor

Bread of the world in mercy broken

Break Thou the Bread of life

Go to dark Gethsemane

There is a green hill far away

### *Good Friday*

**Num. 21:4-9.** **Isa. 53.** The accounts of the crucifixion of Jesus. **Rom. 6: 1-14.** **Gal. 2:15-3:14.** **Heb. 1: 16-10:25.** **I Pet. 3: 17-22.**

**Psalms 22, 40, 69:1-22, 88.**

**Hymns:** When I survey the wondrous Cross

O Sacred Head surrounded (or O Sacred Head, now wounded)

Sweet the moments rich in blessing

Beneath the Cross of Jesus

Jesus, keep me near the Cross

Jesu, in Thy dying woes ("The Litany of the Cross")

### *Eastertide*

**Job 19:23-29.** **Ezk. 37:1-14.** The accounts of the resurrection appearances of Jesus. **Acts 2:22-42.** **Rom. 6:1-11.** **I Cor. 15.**

**Psalms 16, 30, 110, 114, 118.**

**Hymns:** Christ the Lord is risen today

The strife is o'er, the battle done  
The day of resurrection, Earth, tell it out  
abroad  
Angels, roll the rock away  
Come, ye faithful, raise the strain  
Jesus lives, thy terrors now

*Ascension Day*

II Kings 2:1-18. Luke 24:36-53. Acts 1:1-12; 7:54-  
60. Col. 1:9-20. Heb. 4:14—5:10.

Psalms 21, 24, 47, 108: 1-6, 110.

Hymns: Conquering kings their titles take  
Alleluia, sing to Jesus  
Crown Him with many crowns  
See the Conqueror mounts in triumph

*Whitsuntide*

I Kings 19:1-18. Prov. 8:22-31. John 3:1-15;  
15:9—16:16. Acts 2:1-42; 8:14-24; 10:24-48.  
Rom. 8. I Cor. 2; 12.

Psalms 104, 139, 145.

Hymns: Spirit of God, descend upon my heart  
Our blest Redeemer ere He breathed  
Come, Holy Spirit, Heavenly Dove  
Holy Spirit, truth divine  
Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire  
Creator Spirit, by Whose aid

*Trinity Sunday*

Gen. 1 and 2. Job 38 and 42:1-6. John 5:19-47;  
8:12-59. I John 4:7-21. Rev. 4.

Psalm 29, 33, 93, 97, 148, 149, 150.

Hymns: Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty

Holy, holy, holy, Lord

Round the Lord in glory seated

Come, Thou Almighty King

Ancient of days, Who sittest throned in  
glory

(See also *Adoration of God's Majesty*)

*Transfiguration*

Exodus 34:1-10 and 28-35; 40:17-38. Luke 9:28-36.

II Pet. 1:12-21.

Psalm 27, 61, 84, 93, 99.

Hymns: O wondrous type, O vision fair

Lord Jesus on the holy mount

Show me Thy face—one transient gleam

Sweet hour of prayer

*All Saints' Day*

Job 19:23-29. Wisdom 3:1-10; 5:1-16. Matt. 25:  
31-46. John 11:17-44; 14. I Cor. 15. I Thess.  
4:13-18. Heb. 11:39—12:7. Rev. 7:9-17; 19:6-  
10; 20:11-15.

Psalm 1, 15, 121, 146.

Hymns: For all the saints, who from their labors  
rest

Ten thousand times ten thousand

Hark, the sound of holy voices

I heard a sound of voices

O Paradise, O Paradise

Hark, hark, my soul

*Thanksgiving Day*

Deut. 8. Luke 17:11-19. I Thess. 5:12-24.

Psalms 8, 65, 90, 136, 147.

Hymns: Praise to God, immortal praise  
Come, ye thankful people, come  
O beautiful for spacious skies  
God of our fathers, Whose almighty hand

*Independence Day or other National Festival*

Exodus 12:21-28. Lev. 23. Deut. 4:1-14. Esther 9:17-32. 1 Macc. 4:36-61. Matt. 22:15-22. John 7:1-17. I Pet. 2:1-17.

Psalms 46, 47, 48, 66, 78, 100, 145.

Hymns: Our fathers' God, to Thee  
O beautiful for spacious skies  
God of our fathers, Who didst guide  
God of our fathers, Whose almighty hand  
O God, beneath Thy guiding hand

*National Fast*

II Kings 19:1-19. Dan. 9. Neh. 9. Jonah 3. Matt. 11:20-24 and 23:37-39. Rom. 11.

Psalms 3, 12, 20, 44, 74, 77, 79, 80.

Hymns: Lord of our life and God of our salvation  
Father, hear Thy children's call  
God the all-merciful, earth hath forsaken  
(or God the all-terrible)  
O God of love, O King of peace  
To Thee, our Lord, we fly  
Great King of Nations, hear our prayer

*New Year's Day*

**Josh. 24:14-28. Joel 3:9-21. Matt. 25:14-30. II Cor. 5:20-6:10.**

**Psalms 15, 19, 24, 43, 91.**

**Hymns: Standing at the portal**

**From glory unto glory**

**Days and moments quickly flying**

**Go forward, Christian soldier**

*Christian Unity*

**Josh. 3:1-4:18. John 10:1-18; 15:1-16. I Cor. 12. Eph. 4:1-16.**

**Psalms 67, 85, 122, 133.**

**Hymns: The Church's one foundation**

**One sole baptismal sign**

**Blest be the tie that binds**

**Onward, Christian soldiers**

**The Son of God goes forth to war**

**One is our Master, even Christ**

*Christian Education*

**I Sam. 2:18-26 and 3:1-19. I Kings 3:5-15. Luke 2:40-52. II Tim. 3:14-17.**

**Psalms 25, 119 *passim***

**Hymns: Saviour, teach me day by day**

**Shepherd of tender youth**

**Lord, Thy children guide and keep**

**In the vineyard of the Father**

**Hushed was the evening hymn**

**Tell me the old, old story**

**O Word of God Incarnate**

***The Kingdom***

Isa. 9:1-7. Matt. 5:1-16; 13:24-50. Luke 12:35-48;  
14:15-35. Rev. 21:1-22:5.

Psalms 72, 96.

Hymns: Thy Kingdom come, O God  
Hail to the Lord's Anointed  
God is working His purpose out  
Joy to the world, the Lord is come  
Who is on the Lord's side?  
Soldiers of Christ, arise

(See also *Advent Season*)

***Missions***

Isa. 60:1-14. Luke 4:16-30. Mark 16:14-20. John  
12:20-32. Rom. 10:1-15. Rev. 21:22-22:5.

Psalms 2, 46, 47, 67, 72, 96, 115, 117.

Hymns: Jesus shall reign where'er the sun  
O Zion, haste, thy mission high fulfilling  
The morning light is breaking  
Fling out the banner, let it float  
Speed away, speed away, on your mission  
of light  
Ye Christian heralds, go proclaim  
Send Thou, Lord, to every place

***Social Service***

II Kings 2:19-22. Isa. 61:1-9. Matt. 11; 25:31-46.  
Luke 10:25-37. Acts 9:36-43. James 1:27-2:18.

Psalms 34, 36, 43, 49, 52, 72.

Hymns: Christ for the world we sing

Hark the glad sound, the Saviour comes  
Hail to the Lord's Anointed  
Where cross the crowded ways of life  
Hark, the voice of Jesus calling  
Soldiers of the cross, arise  
Go labor on, spend and be spent  
Lord, speak to me, that I may speak  
O Master, let me walk with Thee

*Worship*

Gen. 4:1-15. I Sam. 15:1-16. Isa. 1:10-20. Matt. 5:21-24 and 6:1-18; 12:1-14. Acts 2:44-3:10. I Cor. 14. Heb. 10:1-25; 12:18-29.

Psalms 40, 84, 95, 96, 122, 134.

Hymns: Crown Him with many crowns  
O Saviour, precious Saviour  
Draw Thou near my soul, O Christ  
O for a closer walk with God  
Show me Thy face—one transient gleam  
Dear Lord and Father of mankind  
From every stormy wind that blows

*Adoration of God's Majesty*

Exodus 19:16-25; 40:17-38. II Chron. 6:40-7:3. Isa. 6. Ezek. 1. Mark 9:2-8. Phil. 2:1-11. Col. 1:9-20. Heb. 1 and 2. Rev. 4.

Psalms 8, 24, 93, 95, 97, 113.

Hymns: Mighty God, while angels bless Thee

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty  
Ancient of days, Who sittest throned in  
glory

Round the Lord in glory seated  
Praise the Lord, ye heavens adore Him  
The spacious firmament on high  
My God, how wonderful Thou art  
Angel voices ever singing  
O worship the King, all glorious above

(See also *Trinity Sunday*)

*Praise*

II Sam. 22. I Chron. 16:7-36. Luke 10:17-24. Rom. 11:33-36. Eph. 3. Rev. 5:1-14 and 7:9-17.

Psalms 19, 103, 148, 149, 150.

Hymns: Mighty God, while angels bless Thee  
When morning gilds the skies  
O for a thousand tongues to sing  
Alleluia, sing to Jesus  
Saviour, blessed Saviour  
Fairest Lord Jesus

*Prayer and Intercession*

Gen. 18:16-33. Exodus 32:15-35. I Kings 8:22-61.  
Matt. 6:5-15 and 7:7-12. Mark 14:32-42. Luke  
11:1-12. John 17. Rom. 8:18-30. I Thess. 5:  
14-28. James 5:13-18.

Psalms 51, 61, 130, 141, 142, 143.

Hymns: Sweet hour of prayer

Father, in Thy mysterious presence kneeling

What a friend we have in Jesus  
Prayer is the soul's sincere desire  
Bowing low in deep contrition  
My God, is any hour so sweet

*Litanies*

Saviour, when in dust to Thee  
Son of Man, to Thee I cry  
Father, hear Thy children's call  
God the Father, God the Son  
Jesu, in Thy dying woes  
Lord, on this Thy mercy's day

*Penitence*

See *Lenten Season*

*Hymns of Confession:*

Bowing low in deep contrition  
Weary of earth and laden with my sin  
With broken heart and contrite sigh  
Sinful, sighing to be blest  
When our heads are bowed with woe  
Heal me, O my Saviour, heal  
O Jesus, Lord most merciful  
God, my Father, hear me pray  
Take me, O my Father, take me  
Lord, Thy mercy now entreating

*Trust and Faith*

Num. 21:4-9. I Kings 18:16-40. Luke 12:22-34;  
18:15-17. Heb. 11:1—12:2.

Psalms 16, 23, 31, 62, 121.

Hymns: My faith looks up to Thee

I need Thee every hour  
In the hour of trial  
Jesus, Lover of my soul  
To Thee, O dear, dear Saviour  
My hope is built on nothing less  
My Jesus, I love Thee, I know Thou art  
mine

*Aspiration*

Gen. 32:1-31. II Kings 2:1-14. Matt. 5:1-16; 14:  
22-32; 15:21-28. Luke 10:38-42. John 12:20-30.  
Phil. 3:1-15.

Psalms 27, 42, 63, 121.

Hymns: Make me a captive, Lord

I am Thine, O Lord, I have heard Thy  
voice  
Take my life and let it be consecrated,  
Lord, to Thee  
We would see Jesus, for the shadows  
lengthen  
Father, in Thy mysterious presence kneel-  
ing  
Show me Thy face—one transient gleam

Nearer, my God, to Thee  
More love to Thee, O Christ  
O for a closer walk with God  
Love of Jesus, all divine  
Prince of Peace, control my will

*Love*

Hos. 11:1-11. John 3:16-21; 13; 15; 21:15-23.  
Rom. 8:31-39. I Cor. 13. I John 2:1-17; 4:1-5:8.

Psalms 8, 18, 1-31, 23, 26, 34, 42, 63, 90.

Hymns:

*Love of God*

When I survey the wondrous Cross  
O Love that casts out fear  
Love divine, all love excelling  
O Love divine, that stooped to share  
O Love, that wilt not let me go  
Immortal Love, forever full  
O the bitter shame and sorrow  
I've found a Friend, O such a Friend

*Love to God*

More love to Thee, O Christ  
Gracious Spirit, Holy Ghost  
Saviour, teach me day by day  
My God, I love Thee, not because  
My Jesus, I love Thee, I know Thou art  
mine

*God's Providence and Care*

Exodus 15:1-19. II Kings 6:8-19. Daniel 3:19-30;  
6:10-24. Luke 12:1-34. Acts 27:20-28:6. I Pet.  
2:1-10.

Psalms 23, 77, 118, 139, 145.

Hymns: O God, our help in ages past

A mighty fortress is our God

Faith of our fathers, living still

Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place

The King of love, my Shepherd is

The Lord is my Shepherd

Lead, kindly Light, amid the encircling  
gloom

He leadeth me, O blessed thought

Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah

Peace, perfect peace

*Activity and Zeal*

Judges 6:25-7:22. I Sam. 17:17-49. Neh. 4:7-23.  
Matt. 10:16-39; 21:12-17. John 10:1-18. I Cor.  
9:24-27. Eph. 6:10-20. I Tim. 4:11-16 and II Tim.  
4:1-8; 2:1-13.

Psalms 3, 12, 27, 30, 35, 44, 46, 68.

Hymns: Fight the good fight with all thy might

Christian, dost thou see them

My soul, be on thy guard

Am I a soldier of the cross

Oft in danger, oft in woe

Soldiers of Christ, arise

Stand up, stand up for Jesus

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The Son of God goes forth to war  
Onward, Christian soldiers  
Encamped along the hills of light  
Awake, my soul, stretch every nerve  
Work, for the night is coming  
Go, labor on, spend and be spent

### *Decision*

See *New Year's Day*

### Hymns: Who is on the Lord's side?

Out of my bondage, sorrow, and night  
Take my life, and let it be consecrated,  
Lord, to Thee  
O happy day, that fixed my choice

### *Eternal life*

See *All Saints' Day*

The following blank pages are provided for those  
who wish to insert additional material or notes.

*Notes*

*Notes*

## ***Notes***

***Notes***







